

Thank you for taking my testimony today.

I am a Certified Health Coach through the Institute for Integrative Nutrition with a MEd in Administration. I have had my own practice here in Michigan since 2005.

Through my studies at the Institute for Integrative Nutrition I was able to learn from some of the most well respected names in the nutrition world such as Dr. Andrew Weil, MD and Dr. Mark Hyman, MD.

In my 9 years of practice I have collaborated with MDs, Certified Nutritionists, Registered Dietitians, Doctors of Chiropractic and Educators in private and public schools as well as teaching workshops for staff at the collegiate level like Cleary University in my local community. I've had the opportunity to personally coach Medical Doctors, Registered Dietitians, Chiropractors and Certified Nutritionists in my practice and they often refer patients to me.

The real reason I do what I do though is because my heart is in helping our children live healthier lives. I have had the privilege of working with hundreds of moms over the years, helping them improve their family's diet, and consequently their health.

One client in particular comes to my mind because she represents so many of the busy moms I see. Jenna was referred to me by a local pediatrician after receiving the news that what she had been feeding her young child, thinking it was healthy because it followed the standard feeding suggestions for toddlers, was actually causing his stomach aches and his 3-4 times weekly projectile vomiting. He didn't want to eat. His behavior was challenging and he wasn't growing well. As we sat together the first time, she cried because she was so overwhelmed by the test results; she felt guilty for not knowing that these standard foods could be at the root of her son's serious issues; and now she was completely overwhelmed by the diet changes suggested by the doctor. She had no clue where to start. As we worked together over those next weeks, in collaboration with the MD, I was able to teach her what and how to feed her son in order to avoid the foods causing the problems. As a coach I was able to walk alongside her, problem solve and help her make changes that she needed to make. Within just a few weeks the vomiting stopped. Her toddler started asking to eat. His behavior improved dramatically. I'm sure you can imagine both her parent's relief when they started seeing these results.

This is one example of many that I have. I am only one of many non R.D. nutrition professionals who also have had these kinds of experiences with clients. Thousands of Michigan children and adults are helped every day by professionals who are not Registered Dietitians and we help turn lives around through our work.

What I do—what we do—will be illegal in Michigan if this law is not repealed. Many well-educated and qualified nutrition experts will not legally be able to teach, coach, or support Michigan citizens.

I made a conscious choice about my education. I chose *not* to become a Registered Dietitian because it was not the right choice for me. I do not agree with the fact that their governing organization, The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, is sponsored by companies like Coke, Pepsi and General Mills. That is a clear conflict of interest and it makes me question the integrity of the organization. Having said that, I know there are many highly qualified and professional RDs doing amazing work despite their governing body's sponsorships.

Because Michigan is considered one of the unhealthiest states when we look at health and obesity statistics, it only makes sense that we want every qualified and passionate professional working on this issue. This is about people. It is about the Jennas in our state who need the kind of support that they very likely will not be able to receive if this law is not repealed.

On behalf of myself as a Certified Health Coach, other nutrition professionals who will be forced out of business if this law is not repealed, and the on behalf of so many Michigan Citizens who are helped every day by non-RD professionals, I respectfully request your YES vote on HB 4688 to move it out of committee, and also to support the repeal on the Senate floor.

Warmly,  
Angelle Batten, MEd, CHHC  
June 5, 2014